

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

INFO CNO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 101731

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCLR, TPHY, MILI, PN

SUBJECT: HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEYS VICINITY PANAMA

1. IN ORDER TO SATISFY CIVILIAN AND MILITARY NAUTICAL CHARTING REQUIREMENTS, US NAVY DESIRES TO CONDUCT COORDINATED HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEYS WITH THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA IN WATERS OFF BOTH COASTS OF PANAMA AND THE CANAL ZONE COMMENCING SUMMER, 1976. WHILE EFFORT WILL BE CHIEFLY MARINE CHARTING, SOME OCEANOGRAPHIC DATA WILL BE GATHERED. THE RESULTING NAUTICAL CHART AND OCEANOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WOULD BENEFIT THE US AND PANAMA.

2. THE USNS HARKNESS (T-AGS 32), A COASTAL HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY SHIP OPERATED BY MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND UNDER THE TECHNICAL DIRECTION OF THE NAVAL OCEANOGRAPHIC CONFIDENTIAL

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OFFICE (NAVOCEANO), WILL CONDUCT THE SURVEYS. PARTICIPATION BY PERSONNEL OF INSTITUTO GEOGRAPHICO NACIONAL (IGN) OR "TOMMY GUARDIA" IS WELCOME. THE HARKNESS IS CREWED BY CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OF MILITARY

SEALIFT COMMAND, AND WILL ALSO CARRY A MILITARY DETACHMENT TO CONDUCT ACTUAL SURVEY OPERATIONS. THE VESSEL (UNARMED, WHITE HULLED) CARRIES FOUR SOUNDING LAUNCHES AND A HELICOPTER.

3. IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO MAKE LAND USE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ELECTRONIC SURVEY AIDS AT NUMBER OF SITES. A SMALL ADVANCE PARTY WILL EXAMINE AND SELECT THE LOCATIONS. USE OF ELECTRONIC POSITIONING AIDS WILL REQUIRE A SEPARATE FREQUENCY CLEARANCE. GEODETIC REQUIREMENTS FOR POSITIONING OF THE NAVIGATION AIDS WILL BE COORDINATED THROUGH THE IAGS.

4. THE HARKNESS WOULD CALL AT VARIOUS PANAMIAN PORTS, AS WELL AS THE CANAL ZONE, FOR LOGISTICS, CREW REST, ETC.

5. RESULTS OF SURVEY WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO GOP AS RAW DATA, FINISHED CHARTS OR BOTH. IF DESIRED, PERSONNEL OF NAVOCEANO WILL BRIEF GOP PERSONNEL CONCERNING ALL ASPECTS OF THE SURVEY.

6. FYI NAVOCEANO AND GOP HAVE RECENTLY CONCLUDED A HARBOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HARSAP) AGREEMENT. THIS PROGRAM ASSISTS COUNTRY PERSONNEL IN SURVEYING THEIR OWN PORTS AND HARBORS. END FYI.

7. REQUEST EMBASSY APPROACH GOP WITH THIS PROPOSAL, STRESSING NON-MILITARY NATURE OF SHIP AND COOPERATIVE ASPECTS OF SURVEY. YOU MAY ALSO WISH TO POINT OUT THAT USN COASTAL SURVEY OPERATION WOULD AUGMENT EXISTING HARSAP EFFORT. EARLY INDICATION OF GOP INTEREST IMPORTANT SO THAT WE CAN BEGIN TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS SPECIFIED IN PARA 3. ADDITIONALLY, LEAD TIME IS ALSO NECESSARY TO ASSURE COMMITMENT OF VESSEL TO THIS PROGRAM. KISSINGER
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